

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA:SSOBER/HLK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 169595

EXDIS FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, SA, US, OVIP (RUMSFELD, DONALD)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SECDEF TO SAUDI ARABIA

REFS: (A) JIDDA 4624; (B) JIDDA 4773

1. YOU SHOULD CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO PRINCE SULTAN FROM SECRETARY RUMSFELD DECLINING SULTAN'S INVITATION TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. YOU SHOULD ADD, IN DELIVERING IT, THAT THE PERIOD AHEAD WILL BE A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TIME FOR SECRETARY RUMSFELD TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY SINCE HIS PRESENCE WILL BE REQUIRED DURING THIS TIME OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL ACTIVITY PRIOR TO OUR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. IF ASKED, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT SECRETARY RUMSFELD HAS NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO VISIT ANY COUNTRY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS:

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THANK YOU FOR THE INVITATION TO VISIT THE KINGDOM OF

SAUDI ARABIA, EXTENDED IN YOUR KIND LETTER OF MAY 5, 1976.
I WISH VERY MUCH TO VISIT YOUR COUNTRY AND WELCOME AN

OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS FIRSTHAND ON THE MANY
INTERESTS OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHARE, INCLUDING OUR DEFENSE
SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP.

UNFORTUNATELY, OTHER OBLIGATIONS HAVE ARISEN THAT FORCE
ME TO POSTPONE MY TRAVEL PLANS FOR SOME WEEKS TO COME.
I TRUST THAT YOUR INVITATION WILL REMAIN OPEN, AND I WILL
COMMUNICATE WITH YOU AT A LATER DATE WHEN MY SCHEDULE
BECOMES CLEARER. I SINCERELY REGRET THIS TURN OF EVENTS,
AND HOPE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO WORK OUT ANOTHER MUTUALLY
AGREEABLE DATE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

SINCERELY,

DONALD H. RUMSFELD

END TEXT.

3. YOU SHOULD ALSO SEEK EARLY OCCASION TO INFORM CROWN
PRINCE FAHD OF SECRETARY RUMSFELD'S INABILITY TO VISIT
SAUDI ARABIA AT THIS TIME AND THE REASONS FOR THIS PER
PARAGRAPH ONE ABOVE. RECALLING THE SECRETARY'S EXCHANGE
WITH FAHD ON THIS SUBJECT, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT THE
SECRETARY REMAINS EAGER FOR RUMSFELD TO VISIT SAUDI
ARABIA AND HOPES THAT THE TRIP CAN BE RESCHEDULED BEFORE
TOO MUCH TIME PASSES.

4. FYI: DEPSEC CLEMENTS WILL NOT BE VISITING SAUDI
ARABIA AT THIS TIME. END FYI. KISSINGER

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